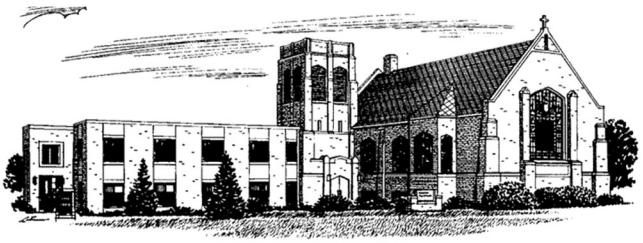
SARON MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085



Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Music Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com

Irma Gorman, Organist

Amanda Bradley, Admin Assistant
Cell: 419-306-5780
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Bradley717@gmail.com

Megan Savage, Bookkeeper
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org

Emily Gaul, Child Care

Typical Sunday at Saron:
Summer of 2022 (beginning June 5):
10am Worship
On-Location and via Zoom
Nursery Available
No Learning Hour

Fall, Winter and Spring (beginning Sept 11):
8:30am Worship On-Location
9:40 Learning Hour for Ages 2-Adult
11am Worship with Zoom Option
Nursery Available

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia
Saron's Mission: *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!*

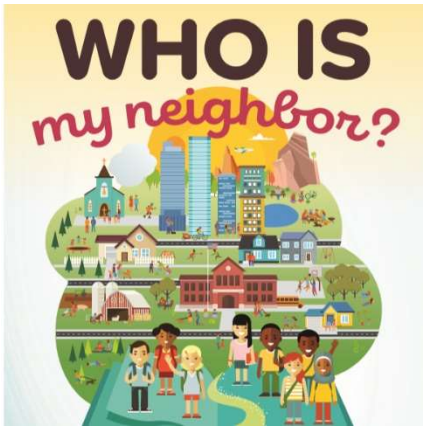
PASTOR JOAN'S ARTICLE FOR JULY 2022

We often think of summertime as a time when things slow down, we can be more leisurely, relax. While that may be true, I find that often, things simply shift. But that is and of itself is good. Our days may still be filled, but our schedules may be different, providing a break in routines, offering a different perspective, and alternatives as to how we spend our time. I pray that your summer months may be filled with times of enjoyment, fulfillment, and renewal.

On July 10, we will take time in worship to pray "For the Healing of the Nations." *We will name before God the nations of the world, pleading for mercy and healing for those places and peoples torn by ancient animosities or terrorized by new fears; those devastated by drought or disease; those crushed by poverty, oppression, or war; and those consumed by power, wealth, or greed.* (From a Litany for the Nations)

I invite you to join the community of faith in praying, as we long for peace among nations and between peoples, peace in our homes and our hearts.

-Pastor Joan



Plan to join us for this fun, interactive Vacation Bible School experience!
6:30pm – 8pm
Monday, August 1 through Thursday, August 4
Ages preschool – 5th grade

There will be stories, crafts, snacks, activities, music and more! Watch for a link to register in the coming weeks.

General Information

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Watch weekly emails and door signage for any change in protocol. As of printing, masks are encouraged for those who feel so inclined but not required. Nursery workers and communion assistants will wear masks.

OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Joan
Monday-Thursday Mornings
Amanda Bradley (Admin Assistant):
Mondays & Thursdays 8am-noon
Wednesdays as needed
Helping Hands Office Volunteers:
Wednesdays 9:15am-11am (approx)
Megan Savage (Bookkeeper):
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30pm

When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (269/983-1273) or contacting the council president.

Note: Emails for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org to ensure privacy. Emails to Amanda and the church office should be sent to info@saronlutheran.org.

Caring and Sharing

IN OUR PRAYERS

Bernice Koski is at Woodland Terrace in Bridgman;
Kathleen Preston is at Woodland Terrace in St. Joseph.

Happy July Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members!

7/2 Elijah Nicholas
7/3 Harper Brown
7/3 Ellie Hammer
7/4 Andrew Huff
7/7 Jennifer Dinges
7/7 Preston Akers
7/8 Elliot de la Foret
7/9 Barb Stelter
7/11 Thomas Freemire
7/11 Emmett Gray-Roll
7/11 Thatcher Gray-Roll
7/12 Scott Gaspari
7/14 Kylie Hammer
7/15 Joyce Marquardt
7/17 Aaron Becker
7/17 Terry Anserello
7/18 Becky Bucha
7/23 Lauren Kauffman
7/24 Ken Kohs
7/25 John Koehler
7/25 Richard Osgood
7/26 Robert Hopkins
7/26 Joan Oleson
7/28 Jennifer Nicholas
7/29 Ilo Coar

Happy July Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members!

7/3 Adam & Shavonn Bradley
7/7 Marcus Roll & Beth Gray-Roll
7/12 Judi & Rian Huff
7/14 Joseph & Katherine Ulrey
7/15 Katherine & James Nadeau
7/25 Linda & Brent Dipert
7/26 Kaitlin & Nicholas Hooper

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round!"

If there are any omissions from the birthday or anniversary list, or if a date is incorrect, please let us know so we can get it correct in the future!

IN SYMPATHY

We offer our condolences to the family of

Richard Schalon

upon his death on May 16, 2022.

A celebration of life service will be held at Saron for Richard, a long-time member, on **Saturday, August 27 at 10:30am.** Visitation will take place before the service, beginning at 9:30am. Burial will follow at Riverview Cemetery.

God is our refuge and strength.
- Psalm 46:1a

CONGRATULATIONS

On May 29, we were honored to welcome Audrey Bauer and Pam & Jim Bauer as new members.
We're so glad to have you as part of the Saron family!

UPDATE ON PATRICK

From Pastor Joan - As many of you know, Vicar Patrick made the decision to end his internship in mid-May due to health concerns. This decision, made in consultation with the bishop and the director of candidacy, allows him to concentrate on his health needs more effectively, which includes chemotherapy treatment for cancer. Even as Patrick's role as vicar comes to an end, we anticipate staying in touch – with the occasional visit, email, phone call, and potential opportunity for guest preaching.

We keep Patrick and his wife Susan in our prayers, as well as the people of Saron who have come to know and love Patrick as both a person and for the work he does for the sake of the Gospel.

We give thanks to God for Patrick's many gifts and the ministry he provided with and among the people of God at Saron.

From Patrick -
When people are truly grateful, I hear phrases like "from the bottom of my heart" or "you'll never know how much this means to me." I prefer to offer a sincere, heartfelt "thank you." I am incredibly grateful for your generosity in my parting gift. Your check is very much appreciated but know you have given me far more in terms of your time, support and feedback.

Wherever God leads, I will always remember my time spent with Saron as special and sacred.

-Patrick Blanchard (former intern)

FORTIFY & fly

Nearly four years ago, we kicked off this capital campaign by gathering together (tightly and with no PPE) to identify our strengths as a church and brainstorm ways to build on those to create focus areas for improvement. Those five pillars are repair and improve our building, enhance our worship space for flexibility and accessibility, investigate the need for addition staff, boosting our brand awareness in the community, and increasing our technological capabilities. June was a good time to compare that work to our progress towards those goals in order to highlight areas still needing attention. Ideally, we would like to complete all remaining Fortify & Fly projects in 2022, realizing supply chain constraints are outside of our control. It's important to know that while our original wish lists created in 2018 are absolutely being used, we've also continued to listen and allow our goals to evolve, as we have as a church and congregation. We'll continue to pass on more details as they become available.

At the end of May 2022, we had collected an additional $816 for a total of $376,363 towards our pledge total of $367,205. If you still have a pledge to fulfill or simply wish to continue giving, we'll find a home for it. As always, thank you for being with us on this journey!

Worship

Are you interested in becoming a member of Saron or learning more about the faith from the Lutheran perspective? If so, contact Pastor Joan.

NURSERY

Nursery service is available during the service. In order to utilize the space most effectively, this option is primarily directed towards our youngest members and guests. For preschoolers that occasionally need more physical and/or emotional space, activities are available in the narthex. There are also clipboards with coloring pages, as well as children's bulletins, to assist kids as they transition into participating in worship. **It's vital to embrace family units in all stages in our congregation and as such, we gladly welcome wiggles and giggles in worship!**

The goal of the nursery is to provide a safe environment to facilitate a meaningful worship experience for families negotiating life with children. We recognize that may not look the same for all and encourage concerns and suggestions.
For health and safety reasons, only the approved childcare providers assigned for that day should be in the nursery space during worship. Nursing mothers are always welcome!

PRAYER GROUP
Join us Mondays at 11am for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship or via other means. We meet in the sanctuary.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR
We will continue the Zoom fellowship at 11am as long as there is interest. The link remains the same each week and is sent out on Tuesdays.

ALTAR FLOWERS
You can sponsor a week by using the link in the weekly email or by calling the church office. Make sure to note any special occasion to be recognized in the bulletin. Flowers are $35 per vase. Please follow up with a check to Saron with "Flowers" on the memo line. Thank you for helping to beautify our worship space! Feel free to take them home after the service to enjoy. **Please return the vase to Saron to be reused.**

FACEBOOK
We often share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS
As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

July 3: Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Isaiah 66:10-14
Psalm 66:1-9
Galatians 6: 1-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

July 10: Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Deuteronomy 30:9-14
Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10:25-37

July 17: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 18:1-10
Psalm 15
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

July 24: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 18:20-32
Psalm 138
Colossians 2:6-19
Luke 11:1-13

July 31: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21
Psalm 16
Galatians 5:1, 13-25
Luke 9:51-62

Mark your calendar for the summer youth group (grades 6-12) gathering being planned for the evening of **Wednesday, July 20** with a location to be announced. Also, we are planning a community-based service project this summer. Stay tuned for further details. We look forward to seeing you. Friends are always welcome!

Contact Merrily at merrilyannsmith@gmail.com with any questions.

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

SUNDAY LEARNING HOUR

With our summer schedule, the Learning Hour takes a break until after Labor Day.

Beginning in the Fall, we will offer a time of age-appropriate study between the two services (9:40-10:30):

- **Grades 5 and Under** meet in the Sunday school classroom.
- **Confirmation Students** (Grades 6-8) meet in the confirmation classroom.
- **Adult Forum** meets in the upstairs lounge.

TUESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

This group intends to continue meeting all summer. Join us for a time of study and fellowship on **Tuesday evenings at 6pm in the upstairs lounge**. Around 7pm, we'll adjourn to a local restaurant for more discussion but with food and drink. All are welcome!

Sometimes you just need to enjoy the beautiful weather!

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text, or email:
Bob Kynast (269-921-2786, bobkynast@gmail.com)
Don Hafer (269-985-3637, hafer.don@gmail.com)

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

For the summer, the **Tuesday at 9:30am** study will be a little more informal and focus on the Gospel lesson for the coming Sunday. The format is that of the African Bible study, where the text is read from different Scripture translations with reflection. **We will meet outside (weather permitting) at the main entrance off the alley. Zoom will still be available.**

Please let Pastor know if you ever have any questions. This class is open to all interested in attending. You are welcome to join any time, for one session or for many.

Here is the list of our selections for good reads and even better discussions for 2022-2023:

Oct 2, 2022	The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles
Nov 6, 2022	One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot by Mariane Cronin
Dec 4, 2022	Still Life by Sarah Winman
Feb 5, 2023	Factfulness; Ten Reasons We 're Wrong About the World and Why Things Are Better Than You Think by Hans Rosling
Mar 5, 2023	The Book of Longings by Sue Monk Kidd
Apr 2, 2023	Strength in What Remains by Tracy Kidder
May 7, 2023	The Violin Conspiracy by Brendon Slocumb

MONTHLY DEVOTION/BREAKFAST

We will NOT have the Saturday monthly devotion/breakfast in July.
Hopefully, we'll start up again in August or September.

Contact Dennis Lundgren with any questions at dennis.lundgren@me.com

Women of the ELCA

DEBORAH CIRCLE

We will gather for dinner at 6pm on Wednesday, July 13 at Papa Vino's Restaurant in St. Joseph. Those that typically attend will be contacted close to the event to determine an accurate reservation number. If you would like to be included but are not on the contact list, let us know!

Contact Melanie McCammon at 269/449-8399 for more information about this group.

Hospitality

SUNDAY SNACKS

Who doesn't love a snack during a time of fellowship in the narthex or courtyard after the service? If you would like to be a Sunday snack host, sign up via the link in our weekly email or call/email the office so Amanda can sign you up. Please plan for 30 to partake. Thank you!

Outreach

NOISY OFFERING

We receive a noisy offering (or those not-so-noisy bills) on the first Sunday of each month.
These gifts are sent to ELCA World Hunger.
Thank you for your generous offerings!

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

Simple food, honestly sourced and lovingly made creates connections, gives fuel to the fight, and starves ignorance and apathy. – Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen

On May 26th, Saron members Marilyn Frey, Pastor Joan, Wendy King, Jim Manore, Dave Bradley and Kathie Bradley were busy at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen preparing lunch for 100 guests. This was the first time in 2 years that the Soup Kitchen dining room was open. Since the pandemic, sack lunches had been served and it was wonderful to return to greeting and serving the guests! The lunches included cookies provided by Kathie Anserello.

If you are able to help with the preparation/serving or the providing of cookies, please use the link in the weekly email or contact Kathie Bradley at 269/921-4665. Thank you to all who continue to support this ministry with your time, contributions, and prayers. *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!*

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

The Inclusivity Task Force is committed to extending a welcome to all. Our congregation adopted the following welcome statement and is a **Reconciling in Christ** church.

As a community of faith who *joyfully shares God's love for all*, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. We are committed to the work of racial equity. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome.

If you ever have any questions or need clarification on our inclusivity journey, please feel free to call any one of the task force members:

Connor Ashley: cashley1837@outlook.com
Laurel Gacek: 269/470-6062 or mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net
Laura Hicks: 517/930-0579 or lhicks42@gmail.com
Darlene Kiessel: 269/313-4062 or kiessel@me.com
Diane Madej (Open Hearts. Open Church): 231/670-0328 or dianemadej234@gmail.com
Pr Joan Oleson: 269/983-1273 or oleson@saronlutheran.org

INTERFAITH ACTION

Interfaith Action

Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity.

Check out the Interfaith news bulletins at swmichinterfaith.org/bulletins

Support

The Support Committee will be meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom. Contact Don Hafer with any questions at 269/985-3637.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Joe Ulrey at josephulrey@yahoo.com to receive more information. Thanks!

Facilities

COURTYARD TABLE & BENCHES

Upon seeing their sad state, members took it upon themselves to spruce up the outdoor table and benches. The boards were run through a planer to smooth the wood and a solid stain was applied, which should keep them protected and looking good for years. People who worked on the boards included Marilyn & Dale Lucy, Jim Manore, and Deb Standen. They were re-installed by Eric & Deb Standen and Marilyn Lucy. Nice job!!

HELPING HANDS (Previously Golden Hammers)

We do all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. We meet on Wednesdays around 9am and know you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There is a job for you to use your helping hands.

JULY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 10am Worship with Zoom Option	4 **INDEPENDENCE DAY**	5 6pm Bible Study	6 9am Helping Hands 11am Zoom Coffee 7pm Deborah Circle	7 9:30am Bible Study	8	9
10 10am Worship with Zoom Option	11 11am Prayer Group	12 6pm Bible Study 8pm Support Meeting	13 9am Helping Hands 11am Zoom Coffee 6pm Deborah Circle Dinner at Papa Vino's	14 9:30am Bible Study **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE**	15	16
17 10am Worship with Zoom Option	18 11am Prayer Group 7pm Council Meeting	19 6pm Bible Study	20 9am Helping Hands 11am Zoom Coffee	21 9:30am Bible Study	22	23
24/31 10am Worship with Zoom Option **11am Planning for Tomorrow; Living for Today Two-Part Series**	25 11am Prayer Group	26 6pm Bible Study	27 9am Helping Hands 11am Zoom Coffee	28 9:30am Bible Study **Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen Day**	29	30

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

JULY 2022 NEWSLETTER

Planning for Tomorrow; Living for Today

Have you ever thought "I really ought to do that" whether "that" be about how you care for an older adult loved one, your loved one's wishes, your own wishes regarding health care options, or other end-of-life issues, including your funeral? "Do I want cremation or burial, what hymns and Scriptures do I select, how do I make it easier on my loved ones?" Perhaps you have wondered and don't know where to begin or maybe it's "I never thought about that!" It may never seem the right time to address these questions, but consider this an invitation to be, possibly, the right time for you.

This 2-week series is for young and older, those planning for themselves or a loved one.

Note: No legal advice will be offered.

Session 1 – Sunday, July 24 at 11am

- A conversation about health directives, caring for older adult loved ones, and having your affairs in order
- Co-facilitated by Pastor Joan and Dr. Erika Zimmons, geriatrician

Session 2 – Sunday, July 31 at 11am

- A conversation about burial practices, funeral/memorial service planning and making your wishes known
- Facilitated by Pastor Joan